

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EUR-12 SSO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PM-04

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3499

INFO EMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2641

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0317

FOR ATHERTON AND SCHAUFLE FROM BREWER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN CONCERN OVER SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA

REF: STATE 019584

1. ASSUME CAIRO 1262 MAY IN TURN REFER FAHMEY'S REQUEST TO CHARGE (CAIRO 0873) BUT WE HAVE APPARENTLY RECEIVED NEITHER CAIRO 1262 NOR STATE 014991 HERE. WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING BOTH.

2. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, WISH EMPHATICALLY UNDERSCORE YOUR POINTS PARA TWO REFTEL. NO SUDANESE, OFFICIAL OR OTHERWISE, HAS EVER MENTIONED TO ME CONCERN AT POSSIBILITY THAT USG ARMS AID TO EPMG WOULD REACH ANSAR. NIMEIRI AND OTHER TOP OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY OUR CONTINUING POLICY OF PROVIDING SUCH SUPPORT TO EPMG, SINCE THEY FEEL ADDIS REGIME (OR RATHER MENGISTU WHO THEY FEEL RUNS IT) IS NOW RPT NOW DRAWING EXTREMELY CLOSE TO MOSCOW. THEY WOULD THUS OPPOSE FURTHER USG ARMS AID TO EPMG AS LIKELY STRENGTHEN PRO-MOSCOW ELEMENTS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRY, BUT NOT ON ANTI-ANSAR GROUND.

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3. AS TO PARA 5 AND 6 REFTEL, I WILL TAKE EARLY OCCASION EXPRESS

OFFICIAL USG CONCERN AT DETERIORATION SUDANESE/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. HOWEVER, FEEL STRONGLY EMPHASIS ON PROVOCATIVE PUBLIC STATEMENTS IS AT THIS DATE MISPLACED. AS FAR AS WE AWARE, LAST SUCH PUBLIC

GOS STATEMENT WAS NIMEIRI'S INTEMPERATE BLAST OF JANUARY 1 IN KADUGLI. NEITHER GOS, NOR, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, EPMG, HAS MADE PUBLIC STATEMENT SINCE (PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION PUBLISHED IN EARLY JANUARY WOULD NO DOUBT BE SEEN BY EPMG IN THIS CATEGORY BUT WOULD BE DESCRIBED BY GOS AS REFLECTION POPULAR OPINION STEMMING FROM LEGISLATIVE BRANCH). ON CONTRARY, GOS HAS CONSCIOUSLY SOUGHT ABJURE RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, AS ILLUSTRATED BY NIMEIRI'S REVERSAL DECISION MAKE FIRESIDE TALK TO NATION EARLY JANUARY, FOLLOWED BY LIMITATION FONMIN'S PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT TO A CLOSED SESSION (NO HINT OF ITS CONTENTS HAVE APPEARED PUBLICLY HERE). WHAT ETHIOPIANS HERE COMPLAIN OF AS "PRESS CAMPAIGN" TO ME, AND I ASSUME TO ADDIS, IS ACTUALLY SPATE OF OSTENSIBLE NEWSSTORIES DESCRIBING EPMG REVERSES AT KARORA, HOMERA, UM HAJJAR AND IEY STATIONS. SUCH ITEMS MAY WELL NOT BE ENTIRELY FACTUAL (THOUGH IN LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT REPORTS THE TRACK RECORD IS PRETTY GOOD), BUT THEY HARDLY FALL WITHIN USUAL RUBRIC OF "PUBLIC STATEMENTS". MOREOVER, WHOLE SUBJECT HAS NOW DISAPPEARED FROM PRESS, WITH MOST RECENT GOS PUBLIC COMMENT BEING THAT BY LOCAL COMMANDER OF KASSALA ABOUT FOUR DAYS AGO THAT BORDER SITUATION IS QUIET. IN LIGHT THIS RECORD, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE TO MAKE SPECIFIC REFERENCE NOW RPT NOW TO PUBLIC STATEMENTS WHEN CARRYING OUT REFTTEL INSTRUCTIONS AND WILL NOT DO SO UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED. I WOULD RECOMMEND ADDIS BE SIMILARLY INSTRUCTED DROP THIS PHRASE, AS EPMG HAS ALSO ABJURED PROVOCATIVE PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN RECENT WEEKS.

4. AS TO EMBASSY CAIRO ENLISTING HELP OF GOE IN MAKING REFTTEL POINTS TO SUDAN (PARA 7, REFTTEL), IN ABSENCE CAIRO 1262 WE
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OBVIOUSLY FLYING BIT BLIND. HOWEVER, BELIEVE WE CAN GET POINTS ACROSS TO GOS DIRECTLY HERE WITHOUT BECOMING INVOLVED IN AMBIVALENT EGYPTIAN/SUDANESE RELATIONSHIP WHICH WOULD HARDLY BE USEFUL PLOY FOR FUTURE OF OVERALL USG RELATIONS WITH SUDAN.
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